

Application No. 10/552,884
Response dated September 26, 2006
OUTSTANDING OFFICE ACTION dated August 29, 2007

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached drawing sheet includes changes to FIG. 1. This sheet, which includes FIG. 1, replaces the original sheet including FIG. 1. In FIG. 1, reference numbers have been added to more clearly define the present invention.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

The action by the Examiner in this application, together with the references cited, has been given careful consideration. Following such consideration, claim 6 has been cancelled and claims 1-5 have been amended to define more clearly the patentable invention Applicants believe is disclosed herein. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider the claims in their present form, together with the following comments, and allow the application.

As the Examiner well knows, the present invention is directed to a sanitizable float valve apparatus. The valve apparatus includes a valve body defining a valve cavity. A fluid inlet and a fluid outlet are formed in the valve body and both are in fluid communication with the valve cavity. The fluid inlet is disposed in the valve body above the valve cavity. A chamfer is formed into an edge of the fluid inlet next to the valve cavity. The fluid outlet is disposed in the valve body and extends radially from the valve cavity. A closing element is disposed in the valve body and has a length that is longer than a diameter of the closing element. A front surface of the closing element has a curved projection formed thereon. The closing element and valve cavity are dimensioned to create an *allowance* between the valve cavity and the closing element. A lever arm is connected on one end to the closing element to control the movement of the closing element. The lever arm is connected on an opposite end to a float.

During operation of the present invention, fluid enters the valve body through the fluid inlet. A majority of the fluid flowing through the valve body exits through the fluid outlet when the closing element is in an open position. Only a small portion of the fluid flowing through the valve body exits through the allowance between the closing element and the valve cavity. In this respect, *only a small portion* of the fluid flowing through the valve element is used to flow over

the closing element to remove any impurities thereon. As the water in a tank in which the float is disposed rises, the lever arm moves the closing element upward toward the fluid inlet. The curved projection on the front surface of the closing element engages the chamfer in the fluid inlet and terminates the flow of water through the valve body. When the fluid level in the tank drops, the float lowers and the lever arm allows the closing element to move downward in the valve cavity to an open position.

In response to the Examiner's rejections, the claims have been amended to define more clearly the patentable invention Applicants believe is disclosed herein. It is respectfully submitted that the cited reference does not disclose a structure as described in the claims in their present form.

The drawing stands rejected under 37 CFR 1.83(a). In response to the Examiner's rejections, reference to the "float" and "bayonet flange" have been removed from the claims and the "front surface" has been labeled as item "7" in FIG. 1. It is respectfully submitted that the drawings are now in compliance.

Claims 1–6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In response to the Examiner's rejection, claims 1–6 have been amended to more clearly and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention and claim 3 has been amended to include sufficient antecedent basis for a "front surface."

Claims 1–4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by GB 595,100 to Abey. The '100 patent to Abey discloses a float valve comprising a body 3, a closing element 15 placed into the body and a float connected to a lever arm 7 for controlling the closing of the

closing element. As shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3 of the '100 patent to Abey, the valve body has a single inlet, i.e., bore 6, and a single outlet 2. In this respect, *all of the fluid* flowing through the valve element passes through bore 6, the valve cavity, over the closing element and out through outlet 2. The '100 patent to Abey therefore does not disclose a structure wherein fluid flowing through the valve exits through the allowance *or* through the fluid outlet when the valve is open.

Claims 2–5 depend from claim 1 and should be allowed for at least the same reasons stated above for claim 1.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '100 patent to Abey in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,793,654 to Bierman. Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '100 patent to Abey in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,785,397 to Young.

The '654 patent to Bierman discloses a float valve made of PTFE and the '397 patent to Young discloses a float assembly with a bayonet connection. Applicant respectfully submits that neither the '654 patent to Bierman nor the '397 patent to Young disclose the deficiencies noted above regarding the '100 patent to Abey.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Furthermore, the remaining claims depend from independent claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are likewise patentable over the cited references for at least the reasons set forth above in connection with the independent claim.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes there are any further matters which

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need to be discussed in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

If there are any fees necessitated by the foregoing communication, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0537, referencing our Docket No. ST9175PCT(US).

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence (along with any paper referenced as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited on the below date with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date: September 26, 2007



Name: Laura K. Cahill

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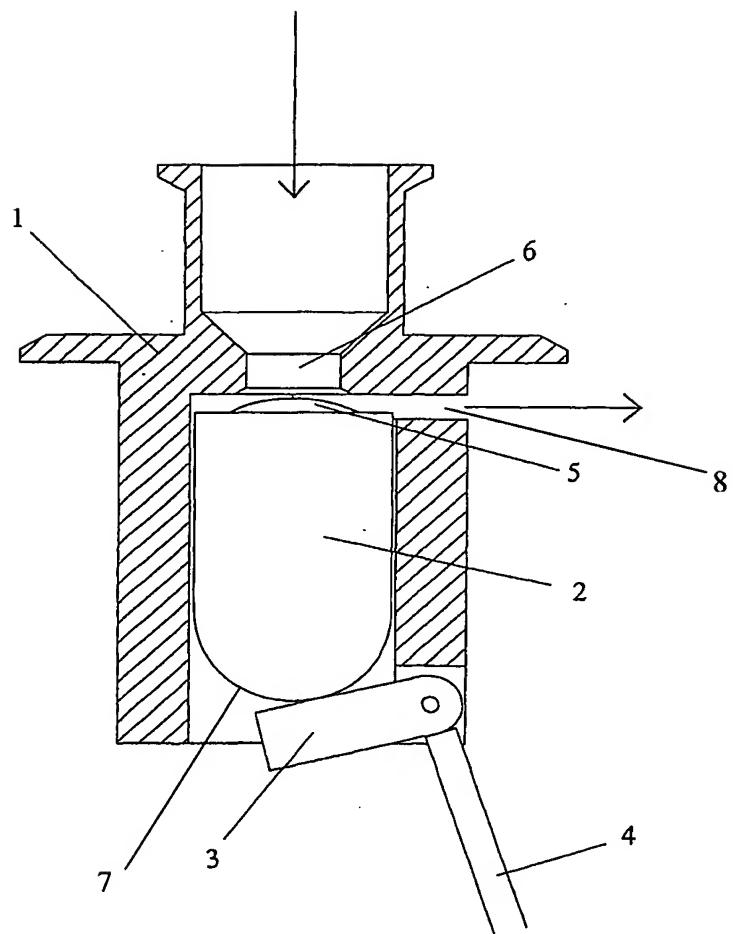


Fig. 1